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Enclosure 6b
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Certification Test Approval Proposal – Overview, Summary Feedback, and Recommendations

Overview

RIDE has recommended the approval of 46 different certification tests to assess the pedagogical and content knowledge of prospective Rhode Island educators. These tests include tests that are currently adopted and required in Rhode Island, tests that have been newly developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), tests that have been adopted by national specialty boards, and tests that are currently required by educator preparation programs in Rhode Island.

RIDE has conducted extensive outreach to identify the recommended certification tests and the proposed passing scores. These outreach efforts include seeking input from educators, professional organizations, and educator preparation programs as well as conducting more than thirty certification test validation studies.

The recommended certification tests are proposed to fulfill RIDE's responsibility, as specified in the November 2011 certification regulations, "to maintain a current list of required assessments and passing scores." Prospective educators, prior to obtaining Rhode Island certification, will be required to provide evidence of the required passing score.

On March 15, 2012, the Board of Regents approved for public comment the Certification Test Adoption Proposal. This public comment period concluded on May 11, 2012. During this time, RIDE received three items of written public comment. A Public Hearing was held on Wednesday April 25, 2012. No one appeared at the Public Hearing to provide comment. Prior to the public comment period, RIDE also invited representatives from all of the Rhode Island Educator Preparation programs to a meeting on April 6, 2012 to provide feedback. Representatives from three programs attended this meeting.

The charts below detail the specific certification tests that generated comments, the feedback that was given to RIDE, and the recommendation and justification for the recommendation for the Board of Regents consideration. The first chart includes feedback that was collected during the public comment period; the second chart details feedback that was collected from the April 6th meeting with the Educator Preparation programs.

Feedback Received during the Public Comment Period

Certification Test	Feedback	Recommendation and Justification
English to Speakers of Other Languages (0361)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed test has too much emphasis on English linguistics and is not reflective of the work of ESL teachers • The proposed score of 151 is too high and would make Rhode Island the third highest score in the country • The passing rate at the proposed score is 71% and too low • The national accrediting association, TESOL, requires that ESOL programs have an 80% pass rate and the proposed score would not generate this pass rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the proposed test and proposed passing score of 151 • Not all participants in the certification tests validation study agreed with the critical feedback provided to the Regents regarding the appropriateness of the test • The proposed test is currently required for certification in 18 states • The passing rate at the current score of 151 is 71% and this passing rate is consistent with other proposed certification tests • Accrediting bodies set expectations for passing rates as part of program quality checks, not to suggest lowering scores to meet those expectations
General Science Content Knowledge (0435)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed score of 153 is too high • Since the test covers many aspects of science, it is difficult for applicants to prepare for this test • Applicant may seek certification in Biology, Chemistry, or Physics rather than focus on General Science which is a more appropriate certification area in the lower secondary grades as a result of this high passing score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the proposed score of 153 • The passing rate at the proposed score is 76% which is consistent with other proposed certification tests • Rhode Island test takers have a higher passing rate, 88%, than the national pass rate of 76% at the proposed passing score • Applicants who wish to become certified in General Science to teach at any secondary grade level, including the lower secondary grades, have not demonstrated significant difficulty in passing this test as evidenced by the high national and state pass rate

Feedback Received from Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs

Certification Test	Feedback	Recommendation and Justification
Chemistry Content Knowledge (0245)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed score of 158 is too high and would make Rhode Island the second highest score in the country The passing rate at the proposed score is 53% which is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the proposed score to 156 Rhode Island test takers have a higher passing rate, 68%, than the national pass rate of 58% at the proposed passing score The RI pass rate is consistent with other tests
Education of Young Children (0021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed score of 174 is too high and would tie Rhode Island with the highest score in the country Rhode Island already has one of the higher scores in the country at 171 The current Rhode Island score of 171 is the recommended study value and should be maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain proposed score of 174 The passing rate at the proposed score remains high at 82% Ensuring rigor in this area is consistent with strategic goals for early learning
Health Education Content Knowledge (0550)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed score of 670 is too high and would make Rhode Island the second highest score in the country The passing rate at the proposed score is 68% and this rate is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain proposed score of 670 Five other states have a score of 670 or higher The passing rate at the proposed score is 68% and is consistent with other proposed certification tests
Mathematics Content Knowledge (0061)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed score of 142 is too high and would make Rhode Island the third highest score in the country The passing rate at the proposed score is 58% and this rate is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the proposed score of 142 Rhode Island test takers have a higher passing rate, 69%, than the national pass rate of 58% at the proposed passing score The Rhode Island passing rate of 69% is consistent with the other proposed certification tests
Middle School Social Studies (0089)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed score of 164 is too high and would make Rhode Island the third highest score in the country The passing rate at the proposed score is 55% and is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the proposed score to 160 The passing rate at the proposed score is 64% and is more consistent with other proposed certification tests

Music Content Knowledge (0113)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed score of 161 is too high and would make Rhode Island the highest score in the country • The passing rate at the proposed score is 67% and is too low • The proposed score would make Rhode Island 1 of only three states that have a score of 158 or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise proposed score to 160 • The passing rate at this proposed score is 70% and is consistent with other proposed certification tests
Physical Education Content Knowledge (0091)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed score of 156 is too high and would make Rhode Island the highest score in the country • The passing rate at the proposed score is 51% and is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise proposed score to 154 • The passing rate at the score of 154 would be 61% and is more consistent with other proposed certification tests • The RI passing rate is historically high in this area
Physics Content Knowledge (0265)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed score of 146 is too high and would make Rhode Island the fourth highest score in the country • The passing rate at the proposed score is 56% and is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the proposed score of 146 • Rhode Island test takers have a higher passing rate, 76%, than the national pass rate of 56% at the proposed passing score • The proposed score is also the recommended study value from a Rhode Island state-specific validation study
Social Studies Content Knowledge (0081)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed score of 162 is too high and would make Rhode Island the highest score in the country • The passing rate at the proposed score is 64% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the proposed score of 162 • Rhode Island test takers have a higher passing rate, 72%, than the national pass rate of 64% at the proposed passing score
World Language – French (5174), German (5183), Spanish (5195)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ETS World Language tests are new tests and may generate pass rates that are too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tests have been in place since 2010 and the pass rates vary between 64% (French and Spanish) and 70% (German) • The proposed scores for each test are the recommended study value and the score that has been adopted by most states •